

## **TOWN OF BLOOMFIELD**

### **POLICY MEMORANDUM**

**SUBJECT:** Public Art Policy

**NO:** Policy # 110.10

**DATE:** September 8, 2020

**AMENDED:**

**DISTRIBUTION:** All Departments, Subcommittees  
Boards and Commissions

**BY:** Bloomfield Town Council

**APPROVED:** January 25, 2021

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

An overarching goal for the Town of Bloomfield is to develop a distinctive sense of place, both physically and culturally. To that end, the Town proposes to enhance appropriate diverse and attractive physical spaces with rich varied cultural and educational art installations. This goal can be achieved in part by promoting a robust public art program. Through such a program, the Town will be able to maintain, foster, and enhance its unique character, which will, in turn help to attract new residents and businesses to the community.

Public art and architecture can serve as a cultural gateway to the Town, enlivening its streetscapes while increasing its local and national identity as a residential, historical and economic destination. Well-placed works of art help introduce the Town to those who visit it and patronize its businesses. Public art serves as a way finder for a particular business, intersection, street, or building. For Bloomfield residents, art can add to their visual quality of life as they go about their daily routines.

For businesses looking for a place to locate, public art indicates to them that the Town promotes a robust civic life, signaling a good environment to locate a profitable business. Thus, public art stimulates economic growth, so it is a good investment for the Town and has relatively low overhead and staffing costs.

In addition, public art assists in carrying out the Town Council's initiative "to encourage, promote and provide opportunity for artistic expression within our Town."

### **II. DEFINITIONS**

Public Art is defined as works of art in all artistic disciplines that are created or designed for, built or displayed in a community space and accessible to all (public) for the benefit of local residents and visitors. Public art may include murals, sculptures, temporary installations, art shows and festivals and many other types of artistic expression. Public Art would include any work of art acquired with public funds.

Public Art Projects include:

1. Projects initiated by the Town and its entities,
2. Projects initiated by community groups, neighborhood associations, or individuals, which may or may not involve funding from the Town

**III. MISSION**

To enrich the Town's visual landscape with works of art and to support quality artistic opportunities for residents, workers and visitors to experience and to enjoy.

**IV. VISION**

Public Art Projects in Bloomfield should provide a return on public investment as it will:

- Create a more pleasing visual living environment for residents and visitors.
- Create a more unique image for the Town within the Hartford County area.
- Reflect the cultural, historic and ethnic diversity of the Town.
- Illuminate the character of the Town from its origins to the present.
- Create an artistic environment that will encourage economic opportunities within the Town.
- Encourage a shared sense of ownership and pride, as many public artworks are created with community collaboration.
- Contribute to Bloomfield's active and dynamic cultural scene.
- Transform our playgrounds, traffic circles, reservoirs, and parks into more vibrant places.
- Create aesthetically developed spaces to meet, talk, and build community.

**V. GOALS**

The goal of the Public Art Policy is to assist the Town in building a collection of public art, which will:

- Reinforce Bloomfield's identity, weaving together culture, people, history, neighborhoods and ideas to create a memorable landscape that respects the past and builds on the future.
- Celebrate Bloomfield's many gateways to its borders with other towns by enhancing them with works of art
- Employ public art to make a more pedestrian-friendly Town
- Commission public art which reinforces parks and neighborhoods
- Support ongoing temporary artwork installations and performance-based arts events in areas with strong pedestrian and vehicular traffic.
- Capture more funding for public art commissions and maintenance.

## **VI. STRUCTURE AND CHARGE**

The Public Art Commission is made up of members of the Community. The 7 members will be appointed by the Council subsequent to recommendation by the Council's Committee on Committees. The 2 year term of office will be aligned with the Town Council's term of office.

The Public Art Commission will appoint a Council liaison, who will provide periodic status reports to the Town Council.

The Public Art Commission will:

1. Act as an arts facilitator, creating liaisons with and providing support to arts organizations;
2. Act as an arts steward by fostering the development and enjoyment of the arts in our community;
3. Select public art and recommend its location within Bloomfield;
4. Act as an arts funds administrator, receiving and allocating Town funds and funds from other sources for purposes of artistic encouragement;
5. Act as the information clearinghouse on artistic activity within and around the Town of Bloomfield.

## **VII. SUPPORT AND FUNDING FOR A PUBLIC ART PROGRAM**

Public Art must be encouraged and financially supported by both the public and private sectors.

1. In collaboration with the Bloomfield Town Council and its Public Art Commission, the following groups will be encouraged to contribute works and financial support to acquire and place art at appropriate locations within the Town:

- Businesses and Developers
- Public and Private Groups
- Residential Communities
- Schools
- Non-Profits
- Individuals

2. The Public Art Commission will work with the following Town boards, commissions, committees, and departments to fulfill its goals:

- Public Works Department
- Parks and Recreation Committee

- Town Plan and Zoning Commission
- Board of Education
- Economic Development Commission
- Library Board of Trustees
- Design Review Board
- Bloomfield Housing Authority

3. The Public Art Commission will coordinate with ongoing Town initiatives, such as the Town Center Plan of Conservation and Development, the Bloomfield Master Plan of Conservation and Development, the Complete Streets Plan, the Master Parks Plan, the Tax Increment Financing Districts, etc. to include Public Art as a component in these plans where appropriate.

4. The Town should strive to incorporate art into any new municipal building and/or its grounds or a major renovation/expansion of a current municipal building and incorporate funding for this action in the financing of these capital projects.

5. The Town should strive to allocate a percentage of its capital improvement budget to support Public Art in Town spaces, including its parks and recreation areas.

6. The Town should encourage a Public Art component for all public and private development projects.

7. In addition, to direct Town funding, other sources for Public Art funding will be non-Town public and private funds, including funds from individuals, businesses, organizations, and grants.

## **VIII. IMPLEMENTATION**

1. The Public Art Commission and Town staff will develop guidelines to implement the public art policy including the process of public art selection, the implementation of art projects, and the selection of site placements within the Town. The Town Manager, Town Attorney, and Town Council shall approve these guidelines. Such guidelines will require Town Council approval.

2. The Public Art Commission, with additional stakeholders as appropriate, will act as the Public Art selection committee.

3. Public Art selection may include open competition and individual consideration.

4. Works of art will be selected with consideration for appropriateness, professionally acknowledged artistic quality, the durability of the artwork, future maintenance concerns and budget impact for the Town.

5. Working with the Town, the Public Art Commission will help identify suitable sites for Public Art Projects. The selection of a site for any Public Art in the Town will be subject to appropriate Town department and Town Council approval in advance of any contract execution to acquire such art works.

6. The Public Art Commission will advise the Town on art projects to be located on site plans by private businesses, and on-site locations initiated by community associations and other community groups. It will review proposals, suggestions and locations for Public Art and make recommendations to the Town.
7. The Town will own, insure, inspect and maintain permanent Public Art on Town property. On private property the specifics will be addressed in an agreement between the Town and the property owner.
8. Public Art Commission will incorporate the standards published by the American Institute for Conservation (AIC) to the fullest extent possible.
9. The Public Art Commission shall submit a report to the Town Council outlining the justification for the selection of Public Art, the choice of a site, and the selection process for all Public Art acquisitions.

## **IX. MARKETING AND PUBLIC OUTREACH**

1. The Public Art Commission, shall document and maintain an inventory of Public Art within the Town.
2. The Public Art Commission will undertake a public outreach program to advertise and promote Public Art through activities such as e-mail blasts, electronic sign boards, local and social media outlets, as well as the Town's website and publications.
3. Town public events should involve a Public Art component as appropriate to the event.
4. The Public Art Commission will work with educational institutions such as: Bloomfield Public Schools and the University of Hartford, among others, to promote the display of student art in public places.